

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of all pending claims (including withdrawn claims) will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

**Listing of Claims:**

1-21 (Canceled)

22. (New) An identifier assignment apparatus for assigning an identifier to a communication device that uses a unique identifier to perform communication, comprising:  
a managing unit managing a state and a valid term of the state relating to the communication device; and

a control unit receiving a request from the communication device and

if the state relating to the communication device is a permission for an assignment, assigning an identifier to the communication device in a response to the request and extending the valid term for a predetermined period of time, and

if the state relating to the communication device is a prohibition of an assignment, assigning no identifier to the communication device in a response to the request and extending the valid term for a predetermined period of time.

23. (New) An identifier assignment apparatus according to claim 22, wherein, when the request from the communication device is received for the first time, the managing unit sets the state to an initial state and the control unit assigns an identifier to the communication device in a response to the request.

24. (New) A computer-readable storage medium storing a program for assigning an identifier to a communication device that uses a unique identifier to perform communication, the program when executed by a computer causes the computer to perform a method comprising:  
managing a state and a valid term of the state relating to the communication device; and  
receiving a request from the communication device and

if the state relating to the communication device is a permission for an assignment, assigning an identifier to the communication device in a response to the request and extending the valid term for a predetermined period of time, and

if the state relating to the communication device is a prohibition of an assignment, assigning no identifier to the communication device in a response to the request and extending the valid term for a predetermined period of time.

25. (New) A computer-readable storage medium according to claim 25, wherein, when the request from the communication device is received for the first time, the state is set to an initial state and an identifier is assigned to the communication device in the response to the request.